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AUTHOR Lippitt, Ronald
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ABSTRACT

Writing from the point of view of a social studies curriculum planner or developer, certain questions are formulated which have relevance for teachers and curriculum leaders who are planning social studies education for the 70's. These questions have to do with: 1) trends in the societal environment creating pressures for changes in social studies/social science education; 2) major trends of present and future change in the lifespace of the young; 3) possible future curriculum and student transactions; 4) helps and hindrances in achieving goals; 5) what first steps to take now. Listing ten societal trends and images of the future, and six trends in the lifespace of the young, the author extrapolates from them to describe elementary and secondary schools of the future. He considers these glimpses of future curriculum and teaching activities relevant to present-day planning, suggests problems and potentialities of trends toward change, and discusses possible first steps toward change in social science education, which will play a core role in school programs and the lives of the young. (DJB)

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THE DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE: IN OUR SOCIETY, OUR STUDENTS, AND OUR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Ronald Lippitt
Program Director, Center for Research on the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge
President, Social Science Education Consortium

In these reflections I am sharing with you in November of 1969 I am attempting to take the posture of a social studies curriculum developer or planner trying to clarify the questions I need to think through to do a forward looking job of planning and implementing a curriculum design for 1970-1980. These reflections will have relevance I believe for both the elementary and secondary teacher, for curriculum committees, school administrators, and also for parents, publishers of curriculum materials, and for those of us in higher education who are trying to do a more significant job of pre-service and in-service preparation of social studies teachers and curriculum leaders.

I began my planning reflections by trying to formulate the inquiry questions that I needed to clarify to do a sound job of planning. After quite a bit of struggle and revision I arrived at these questions:

1. What are some of the major trends in our societal environment which will create pressures for change, and opportunities for change, in the functions of educating the young, with particular reference to social studies or social science education?

2. What are some of the major trends of change in the lifespace of the young, now and in their future, which should give us guidelines for helping us prepare them to live more productively, today and tomorrow and a decade from tomorrow?

3. What might the curriculum and teacher-student transactions of the future look like if we were to creatively meet these confrontations from our images of the future, that is our future societal situation and the future life situations of our learners? What images of potentiality can I derive and create to give me some concrete goals for my planning and some commitments to release my energy for change effort?

4. What are the problems and the potentialities of mobilizing the kinds of efforts toward change which are implied and needed if we are to move toward these goal images? What are our resistances, our blockages, our potentialities, our readinesses and our resources?

5. And finally, what are some of our first steps of action if we do decide we want to move?

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I have scanned a variety of studies of the future running from Julian Huxley to the General Electric Company to the Joint Commission on Mental Health for Children and Youth. I have selected several trends which I think represent some of the most relevant images of future for us as educators, and particularly social science educators, trends from which I think we can derive some directions for curriculum planning.

Societal Trends and Images of the Future

Trend 1: It seems clear there will be a continuation and intensification of the trend towards separation of the community and the society into polarized special interest groups and coalitions. Some of the acute cleavages will be racial, inter-generational, political, economic, male-female, consumers. With this increase in conflict and confrontation there will be more necessity for skills and procedures of negotiation and compromise. Every day the news is full of examples: group homes just for teenagers, women's protest activities, left wing and conservative student groups, groups pro and con the legalizing of marihauna, pro and con guarenteed income for the poor, etc.

Trend 2: There will be less and less tolerance for depersonalization, for being lost in the mass, more rejection of pressures towards conformity, more anti-establishment feelings expressed. The increase in amount of education per person will result in more self respect and more intolerance of authoritarianism and of social restraint. We can see this trend in such symptoms as the themes of such rock and roll music as Mr. Business Man, Give a Damn; also in the great increase in attendance at religious classes on campus; and the tremendous development of personal growth programs for adults across the country.

Trend 3: There are dramatic changes already under way in attitudes toward work and money, and these changes will grow and spread. As the General Electric Study of the future puts it, "Money will be much more taken for granted, much less a motivator to achievement, it will become means instead of an end in itself. There will be a growing demand that one's job be meaningful. It will become evident, increasingly that the notion that hard or unpleasant work must be tolerated because it is unavoidable will have less and less acceptance. The concept that work is a duty and leisure must be earned will be more and more challenged." They point out that some of the anti-materialism of the hippie experimentation will become much more normative in the future and that emphasis on the actualization in the here and now, rather than delayed gratification in the future, will become much more the normative posture. That may be part of the "affective seventies."

Trend 4: Already over half of the work jobs in our country are human service jobs rather than technical jobs of manufacturing or growing crops or construction or extracting natural resources like mining and oil. By 1975 probably 75% of the work roles will be service to persons instead of working with things. The skills of interpersonal relationships and group work will become more and more crucial, occupationally, at many levels of skill and training.

Trend 5: The amount of money a person has to spend by his own decisions on improving the quality of his life, travel, leisure, self improvement, will increase over 50% by 1980, from an average of $2,400 per family to $3,600. One of the reasons for the predicted decline of birth rate will be the search by couples for a different quality of living through ones optional choices for spending. One consequence is that

there will be an increasing personal and public impatience with economic deprivation and hardship, and more and more pressure for federal attacks on hunger, unemployment, annual income and so on.

Trend 6: The role of education will be dramatically different in the future. The trends are already visable. The need to learn, and the processes of retraining, will continue throughout a persons career and life. With the increased rate of change in occupational and leisure time opportunities, and life requirements, the increased rate of production of new knowledge will greatly increase the status of educational programs. There is much agreement between the studies of the future that education will become less and less a matter of transmission of accumulated knowledge and more and more a process of developing the thought processes and values and skills that prepare for change and actively help initiate change. Versatility, flexibility, problem solving ability will be ever more important educational goals. It seems probable that a large portion of persons will go through a cycle of as many as three jobs in a lifetime because of automation or obsolescence of work skills. There is obviously a tremendous implication of retraining or re-education as continuing processes.

Trend 7: With the increasing complexity and magnitude of the social problems to be solved and the rapidity and vividness of communication throughout the world all persons, groups and nations will be increasingly aware of the fact of interdependence. With the world, in McLuhan's language, becoming a "global village," other people's problems will also become our problems increasingly. We will see that we will only be able to meet our needs and achieve our ends by using the resources of others, working together on mutual problems. This decrease in the self-sufficiency of any social unit will also be more and more true at the level of the local community, as well as internationally, and at the level of relations between local, state and federal activities. One of my grad students last night said, "We are planning to have 200 students fly over to Vietnam in a couple of weeks. Could you help on how we could design the briefing so that during the time they are together in trios by seats on the plane they could work out their problems of sampling and the content of their interview schedules."

Trend 8: Another very significant trend might be called the anti-specialization or inter-disciplinary trend toward integrated teamwork in the fields of scholarship, and of action. In the universities many of the departmental lines in the social sciences have been eroded or blurred by inter-disciplinary graduate programs and research institutes. Schools of Applied Behavioral Science will begin to encompass the old schools of Education, Social Work, Public Health, Public Administration, Business Administration and so on. In the community many types of heterogeneous action and service teams will be created. For example, inter-agency units from education, religion, social welfare, health and business, inter-racial teams of volunteers from

the suburbs in central city, teams of professionals, para-professionals and volunteers will develop. There are a great variety of such glimpses of the future already, with community wide recruiting and training of volunteers, including for the school volunteer programs. A laboratory course I began to teach some 10 years ago in Planned Change in the department of Sociology and Psychology, now has 150 applicants each semester from six different professsional schools and four departments because of the concern of graduate students for scientific problem-solving, and their awareness of what the future is going to look like in the movement toward integration of the disciplines.

Trend 9: In one important way the image of the future will have a similarity to our past. There will be a growing need for every citizen, young and old, to contribute voluntary time and energy toward the maintenance and improvement of the quality of life of the community. The needs for social service and educational, medical, child care, family life, recreational and cultural services will far outstrip the funds and professional womanpower and manpower available. Trained volunteers will be the basis for much of our coping with what one study calls the problems and challenges of "social perfectability." The new national prominence being given to "voluntarism" is one clue of what we can expect. One metropolitan school system already has 3,000 volunteers actively carrying out educational functions with children.

Trend 10: A tenth trend is the changing role of the family in the socialization and education of the young. The family is losing and evidently will continue to lose cohesion and influence on the values and behavior of the young. There are some who predict that the family will "make a comeback" through massive programs of pre-parent and parent education and more time spent by fathers in family life activities. More of the future thinkers seem to be predicting a weakening of the nuclear family and the development of new patterns of collective child rearing and a greater variety of parental role figures in the bringing up of the child.

This is just a sample of the confronting education-relevant societal trends. We must move on to look at some trends in the lives of the young.

Trends in the Lifespace of the Young

Trend 1: A rapidly developing trend is toward increase in the power of the young in relation to the setting of goals and plans and designs for the programs of education and work and leisure time in which they are involved. This trend will continue and will result in greater accountability, and responsibility in working relationships with adult leaders, as we find more and more young people on boards of national agencies, county boards of supervisors, boards of education, the boards of trustees of churches, and the boards of Regents of universities. There will be a dramatic change in the posture of the young as power role brings with it countability and responsibility in working relationships with the older generation.

Trend 2: One of the bases of the increasing inter-generational confrontation is the fact that a fraternal or peer society is developing among the young in which they have learned to give and receive support from each other and to gain strength and sophistication for their vertical relations with the older generation.

Trend 3: Because of their increase in autonomy and affluence and information and sophistication the young person will face and make many more, and more important, decisions every day and week. He will face more opportunities for self destruction or growth and development. He will make many more decisions which will determine what types of opportunities and persons will influence and guide his development into adulthood.

Trend 4: As the young achieve more influence and responsibility they will become increasingly involved in finding and exploring alternatives for social progress rather than focusing primarily on anti-establishment efforts. Pro-future attitudes and strategies will more and more become the focus of energy for the young. Instead of spending energy on colluding to thwart narcotics control efforts they are already developing political strategies to influence legislation; educational efforts to develop norms of internal control within the peer culture; and public education programs to influence the attitudes and values of the older generation.

Trend 5: In their demands for more meaningful educational experiences the young will help develop more and more apprenticeship experiences in the community, more field work as part of the curriculum. One of the many significant field work learning opportunities will be the widespread development of programs of older students giving educational and counseling help to younger students.

Trend 6: One of the major developments of inter-generation relations will be the development of cross-generation coalitions of youngers and olders. A variety of adults, particularly elder citizens and young adults will team up with the teenagers to help them win community status for teenagers and to help develop the initiatives for change.

Looking in on Social Scienc Education in 1975

Now let's try to develop a more concrete perspective by trying to derive a few major dimensions of change in social studies curriculum design and teaching activity from these images of the future. Let's start with a visit to an elementary school some time in the future and then take a look at a secondary school situation.

As we look in on the elementary school we find that two teachers are supervising a program for 50-75 children of three age levels. The teaching team includes one half-time para-professional aide, a team of eight parents and older citizen volunteers who rotate their times in the team, and a squad of about a dozen older student volunteers from three to five years older than the students

in the social studies program. They have three connected rooms to work in as well as a resource center. The teachers have a regular review and planning session with their team twice a week after school. They are the professional leaders of the learning team.

--The teachers tell us that the focus of their social science period each day is on development of awareness, sensitivity, skill, and information about some of the core themes of the students daily experience as a starting point, e.g., the phenomenon of conflict, power, compromise, love, apathy, decision-making.

--Small lab teams of students are formed around inquiry interests after exposure to a variety of confrontations from which they choose their inquiry projects, and each team has an older helper as a consultant and an elected lab team leader, one of their peers. They carry on an active program of observation and data collection and with the help of their older student aides have access to the use of the computer for processing their material.

--Although they start from the here and now of their own life situation they work on achieving comparative perspective by comparing the phenemon they are studying in their own peer culture with the adult society around them and they also make analyses of peer level phenomenon in groups in other cultures as cross cultural analysis.

--They have an active program of inquiry into causation in comparing the here and now with knowledge of historical periods.

--There is a very active program of value inquiry into desirable changes, ways of creating different futures, an active program of using elders as informant resources and evaluators.

--There is also a program of anticipatory practice and application in applying their findings, their learnings to their non-school life.

--The teaching team holds sessions on learning problems, involvement strategies, individual needs for help of the students, the retrieval of new resource materials and plans for the use of them.

--There is a very interesting program of identification of resources among the children. In the back of the room there is a little directory called "Who Knows What in Our Room" in which the skills of the various students are listed, e.g., in observation methods, interviewing methods, connections to various outside resource persons are indicated for referral purposes.

--There is a class steering committee collecting process feedback and evaluation to help improve the classroom work.

--The learning team conducts a parent and older sib conference to review what's going on so there can be help and support at home for the learning activities and applications.

--The teacher in-service sessions put a great emphasis on exchange of practice designs for sharing teaching practices with each other.

--They have a very concrete plan for periodic use of outside consultants. From this brief glimpse let's move on to the secondary school.

School

The Secondary Visit

We find the total social science education program of all grade levels (although the term "grade level" has become fairly irrelevant) focused around the activities of the Social Science Studies Center where we find a mixture of project teams, consultations on methods, seminars on special topics, the resource library and the research program of the Building Council. The Building Council is a combination of the old faculty council and the student government unit. Here are a few samples of what we observed in the ongoing program.

--A volunteer research staff of students working for the Building Council are conducting an interview survey project with a sample of parents, teachers, students, administrators, to identify the issues of conflict between the different parts of this population in terms of curriculum evaluation and desires for change. They are making active use of the computer, training other student volunteers as interviewers, and they have a very exciting design for feedback sessions with their findings as an approach to problem solving.

--There is a wide variety of inquiry teams conducting projects which have been initiated by students but have been developed with collaboration and testing of the faculty members and older student assistants who are called social science aides. There is a survey under way on the degree and type of alienation of the elder citizens in the community. There is another study in the elementary school of the ideal age level models for young children. There is also a study being conducted of parents attitudes toward volunteering to help in the school program. There are some exciting social problem study groups around population, pollution, and inter-group conflict.

--There is a student initiated seminar under way on the history of revolution, in which there is a lot of attempt to do comparative analysis with inter-generation conflict phenomenon.

--There is a faculty member and a parent team offering a seminar on the causes of stability and instability in interpersonal relations between the sexes.

--There is a committee meeting under way planning the Social Science Fair.

--The Executive Committee of the Social Science Center, students, and faculty, are meeting in their regular bi-weekly meeting to review the curriculum initiative and resources, to look at the feedback on needs that aren't being met, to look at improvement of the resources. They are planning a current social problems confrontation laboratory for a week-end event for students and parents.

--A very active program of simulation of other culture situations is in progress including a focus on social deprivation and underpriviledged cultures.

--There is a group process study under way experimenting with creating the group conditions that support more active learning, that facilitates mature group actions and that improve the educational environment of the students.

--A day long research derivation conference is being held on the development of a valid and feasible drug policy.

--A community survey is being completed on teenage employment opportunities.

Why do these particular glimpses of future curriculum and teaching activities seem relevant as goal images in terms of their connection with the kinds of reflections and predictions about the future of my opening remarks?

1. First of all there is a strong emphasis running through these activities on learning the methods of problem solving, of becoming a self renewing person, achieving inquiry competence, and abilities in learning to learn.

2. There is a strong emphasis on the here and now of daily life confrontation as a starting point for inquiry, and for moving from that into comparative study of the past, using historical, economic, political science materials. There is also an active comparative focus in the contemporary here and now world between the <u>there</u> and the <u>here</u>, using material from anthropology and sociology. There is an active comparative study of <u>them</u> and <u>us</u> using analysis of inter-generational material from social psychology and psychology as a basis for the development of social awareness, analytic perspective and competence and commitment for linking ideas to action taking.

3. The third characteristic is the focus on occupational and avocational preparation--apprenticeships for human services and applied social science roles."

4. There is creative use of peer system resources, like-age peers and older age peers.

5. There is active use of volunteer manpower resources of community elders.

6. There is effective integrating of the content of the disciplines through inquiry problems which require cross disciplinary concepts and methods.

7. Finally, in all the teaching and learning transactions one of the most important observations is of changes in the inter-generational authority situation. There is a close working relationship between the generations.

Where Are We Now? What Are Some of the Problems and Potentialities? What Are Some of the Problems in our Here and Now Thinking about This Kind of Change Effort?

1. The exciting frontiers of new knowledge and methods of inquiry in the social sciences have not been available as resources to teachers, students, curriculum coordinators.

2. The student culture tends to support currently either alienation and distrust in relation to social studies activities or a conformity orientation towards passive rather than active use of learning opportunities and resources.

3. The new curriculum resources on the whole do not provide adequate help to the teacher in the competencies of classroom leadership and student involvement, and the idea of inquiry is very cautiously advanced with no great creativity.

4. The teachers have very limited training for, or consultant help in planning designs, for learning with emphasis on individualization, sub-group work, student initiative, and use of scientific resources.

5. Few teachers have had any experience with the organizing and leadership of teaching teams of volunteers and paraprofessionals.

6. The total school program, the blocks of time and daily schedule is a barrier to the development of community based field work and the involvement of other community agencies. There are some six other types of agencies in every community that have to do with the rearing and educating of the young which are not collaborated with by the schools.

7. The lack of teaming of teacher colleagues make risk taking more difficult and inhibits support of learning to adopt and to adapt new materials and approaches.

What Are Some of the Resources and Supports to Help Us Move into This Kind of Creative Change Effort?

1. Perhaps one of the strongest supports is the discontent of students and their demand for relevance. As one very exciting young black man I was working with recently--11th grader meeting with the school administration said, I just don't see why you won't let us help you run the school. Don't you know not a single one of us has to learn anything from you." But he wanted to learn.

2. The great excitement and support for good teaching which students offer in their response when they become involved in learning as a real opportunity to do your own thing.

3. The recent and growing involvement of leading social scientists in the revision and development of the curriculum.

4. The fact that so much of basic social science can be explored by starting from the here and now life situations of students.

5. The opening up of the school program in many school systems to greater flexibility of scheduling.

6. The great increase in awareness of social problems and the growing sense of commitment to do something about them, to be an activist rather than passive.

7. The great increase in available teaching resources.

8. The enthusiasm of older students for helping teach the youngers when given an opportunity, and help in the training to do so. This training, by the way, in a number of schools is now a social studies course in itself.

9. The increase of citizen interest in giving service as volunteers to the school teaching program.

What About Organizing First Steps for Action? What Are Some of the Directions For Change That Emerge From These Reflections on the Dimensions of Change And of our Resistance and our Readiness?

1. I see some exciting efforts of teams beginning to scan the new social science education resources from the inter-disciplinary curriculum teams and using some of the critical analysis techniques, such as those developed by the Social Science Education Consortium, to assess the available resources and make careful adoption decisions. Although I use the word adoption, in any creative program it is obviously a matter of adaptation rather than adoption

2. A second starting point is scanning the new resources in teaching design for approaches to collaborative involvement of young learners of all ages--using materials on group process and the training of peer leaders, the use of cross-age helpers, the utilization of students on curriculum committees and evaluation teams, the use of class steering committees and so on.

3. The growing trend to initiate genuine sharing of practice institutes and procedures within and across school systems, and even across community agencies. I was recently involved in one in which those direct workers with the young in the community, across some twenty agencies, (some volunteers and some professionals) were carrying on once every two weeks exchange of practice documentation activity in which they were producing documented practices through interviewing each other and coming out with a workbook of techniques. Workers with the young such as Big Brothers, counselors, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and a whole variety of other direct workers were contributing with great excitement to each other's knowledge and technology for helping the young.

4. Another approach is to start with student help, a survey of the parents and other community resource persons. One school system has a card index of over a thousand adults available as resource persons in various skill and content areas.

5. Another approach is to take another look at scientific method in the social sciences as providing guidelines for exciting adventures into inquiry.

6. A starting point for many is the risk of using others as helpers in teaching rather than trying to carry the ball alone. I think one of the exciting developments I see in my work during the summer months is the increasing participation in in-service training laboratories which are focused on the skills rather than just on the informational and conceptual material of leading applied social science activity with the young.

Concluding Reflections

As I worked through these reflections, I found myself getting very excited about the core role for social studies education in the program of the school and in the lives of the young who need and are ready for so much support in their movement towards the future. The most critical dimensions of change are not out there in the society around us. They are not in the rapid changes of the social environment. They are not in the lives of the young we are teaching. They are not in the rapid production of new curriculum methods.

The key dimensions of change must be within us. In our readiness to risk changes in our coneption of social science education. In our readiness to develop new skills, in becoming resources for the young and becoming collaborators with the young. In our readiness to share the teaching role with others, to build educational teams and to trust a variety of resource persons other than ourselves. A readiness to turn the school and the community and the larger society into a laboratory for learning.